

**COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
AGENDA ITEM TRANSMITTAL**

(1) DEPARTMENT Administrative Office	(2) MEETING DATE 4/19/2016	(3) CONTACT/PHONE Lisa Howe 781-5011	
(4) SUBJECT Thirty-day update on current drought conditions and related management actions for the Board's review of the continuing need for the March 11, 2014 proclamation of local emergency pursuant to Government Code section 8630. All Districts.			
(5) RECOMMENDED ACTION It is recommended that the Board receive the thirty-day update on current drought conditions and related management actions establishing the need to continue the proclamation of local emergency due to drought conditions in San Luis Obispo County.			
(6) FUNDING SOURCE(S) N/A	(7) CURRENT YEAR FINANCIAL IMPACT \$0.00	(8) ANNUAL FINANCIAL IMPACT \$0.00	(9) BUDGETED? Yes
(10) AGENDA PLACEMENT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consent <input type="checkbox"/> Presentation <input type="checkbox"/> Hearing (Time Est. ____) <input type="checkbox"/> Board Business (Time Est. ____)			
(11) EXECUTED DOCUMENTS <input type="checkbox"/> Resolutions <input type="checkbox"/> Contracts <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinances <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A			
(12) OUTLINE AGREEMENT REQUISITION NUMBER (OAR) N/A		(13) BUDGET ADJUSTMENT REQUIRED? BAR ID Number: <input type="checkbox"/> 4/5 Vote Required <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	
(14) LOCATION MAP N/A	(15) BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENT? No		(16) AGENDA ITEM HISTORY <input type="checkbox"/> N/A Date: <u>3/11/14, 4/8/14, 5/6/14, 6/3/14, 6/17/14, 7/15/14, 8/12/14, 9/9/14, 10/7/14, 11/4/14, 12/2/14, 12/16/14, 1/6/15, 2/3/15, 2/24/15, 3/24/15, 4/21/15, 5/19/15, 6/16/15, 7/14/15, 8/11/15, 9/1/15, 9/22/15, 10/20/15, 11/17/15, 12/15/15, 1/12/16, 2/9/16, 3/8/16, and 4/5/16</u>
(17) ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE REVIEW This item was prepared by the Administrative Office.			
(18) SUPERVISOR DISTRICT(S) All Districts.			

County of San Luis Obispo



TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Administrative Office / Lisa Howe 781-5011

DATE: 4/19/2016

SUBJECT: Thirty-day update on current drought conditions and related management actions for the Board's review of the continuing need for the March 11, 2014 proclamation of local emergency pursuant to Government Code section 8630. All Districts.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Board receive the thirty-day update on current drought conditions and related management actions establishing the need to continue the proclamation of local emergency due to drought conditions in San Luis Obispo County.

DISCUSSION

Background

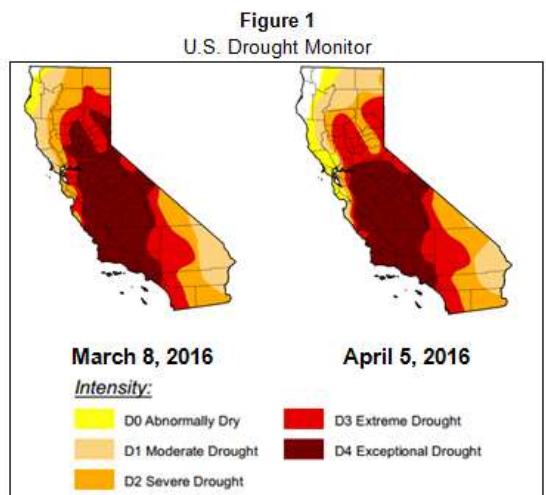
On March 11, 2014, the Board adopted a resolution proclaiming a local emergency due to drought conditions in San Luis Obispo County. Section 8630 of the California Government Code and County Code Chapter 2.80.070 (2) require that the Board of Supervisors review the need for continuing the local emergency at least every 30 days until such emergency is terminated. The Board also directed staff to return every 30 days to provide an update on the status of actions by the Drought Task Force, including a report on the analysis regarding local water conditions, local responses, conservation and outreach projects, and the State Water Project.

The last drought update was on April 5, 2016. Previous thirty-day updates are available at the following link:
http://www.slocounty.ca.gov/admin/Drought_Update/County_Drought_Updates.htm

The Drought Task Force continues to meet regularly to coordinate drought monitoring, impact assessments, responses to emergency health and safety, and public communication and outreach. Because February's Monthly Drought Update was presented on April 5, this is an abridged update and does not include another Monthly Drought Update attachment. The next 30-day update is scheduled for May 17, 2015. Current drought conditions confirm the need to continue the proclamation of a local emergency. Provided below is a summary of the current conditions and conservation and response efforts. Drought conditions have remained relatively unchanged and there were no major actions requiring further discussion that have occurred since the last update.

Current Conditions

Much of the state remains in a severe drought or worse. The latest U.S. Drought Monitor report released April 5, 2016, indicates the majority of San Luis Obispo County remains at the D4 – Exceptional Drought intensity rating (Attachment 1). As noted in the April 5 update, the north western portion of the County has moved down to the D3 – Extreme Drought intensity rating. Approximately 74% of California is at a level D2 Severe Drought or worse with



32% of the state at a D4 intensity level. Figure 1 on the previous page shows how the intensity levels throughout the state have changed in the past month.

The percentage rainfall throughout the County for the 2015-16 water year (July 2015-June 2016) ranges from 59-93% of average (Attachment 2). Reservoir levels remain significantly lower than the average percentage capacity including: Nacimiento 35% (130,685 acre feet); Whale Rock 36% (14,190 acre feet); Lopez 30% (14,630 acre feet); and Salinas 14% (3,265 acre feet) of capacity (Attachment 3).

Outlook

NOAA's Climate Prediction Center has is still posting an El Niño Advisory for a strong event to continue with gradual weakening into early summer 2016. The Seasonal Drought Outlook is calling for the drought to persist and it appears likely that the Central Coast will remain in "exceptional" drought at least until next winter.

Impacts

Agricultural Conditions

Generally, agricultural conditions remain unchanged. Rangeland plant species continue to go to seed earlier than normal. Berry harvest continues to peak with good yields and high quality reported. Vegetable growers have taken advantage of the break in the rain to cultivate and plant fields.

Analysis of preliminary statistics for 2015 production and acreage values indicate a general decline in yields and planted acreages due to drought conditions including lack of irrigation water, salt accumulation in soil, and other weather related events. The 2015 statistics will be finalized in May and the Agricultural Commissioner/Sealer will make a presentation of the data and trends to the County Board of Supervisors on May 10, 2016.

Fire Conditions

Although large fire potential has been reduced significantly by precipitation in most areas, areas are still vulnerable to wildfires. The monthly/seasonal outlook from Predictive Services calls for normal large fire potential through June 2016.

CAL FIRE is currently at winter preparedness staffing levels with two additional wildland engines implementing a number of fire prevention projects throughout the County. For the 2016 fire season, 20 new firefighters have been hired and 38 additional firefighters will be hired on April 4. Once training is completed, they are deployed to their assigned fire stations. April 11 is the target date for increasing staffing to 10 wildland engines.

Hazardous Trees

Widespread tree mortality is plainly evident throughout the County. All tree species have been adversely affected by the drought. The area most severely impacted is the Cambria Monterey Pine Forest. The eucalyptus stands on the Nipomo mesa are also showing a sharp increase in the number of dead trees and in the number of live trees with dead crowns. The epidemic levels of tree die-off create a serious fire and safety hazard and, even if the County receives normal or above rainfall this winter, dead trees will continue to pose major threats to public safety. A number of local agencies have been working together to address the threat. The County is coordinating with the state to help address the issue of tree mortality and secure the necessary resources to help this growing problem.

Economic Conditions

The County continues to identify assistance programs to help rural communities, businesses and individuals impacted by California's ongoing drought conditions. Information regarding drought assistance for rural homeowners has been placed on the County Drought Conditions and Water Conservation webpage. Rural Development, an agency of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), delivers a number of programs to help rural communities, businesses and individuals impacted by California's ongoing drought conditions.

The Governor's Drought Task Force created an online intake form for local, state, or tribal and federal agencies to document domestic water issues. The information is intended to inform and coordinate state response and mitigate drought impacts. Both agencies and individuals can complete the reporting form. Individuals with domestic water issues are encouraged to contact County Environmental Health at (805) 781-5544 or visit the state online reporting website at <https://mydrywatersupply.water.ca.gov/report/>.

County Facilities Usage and Conservation Actions

Water Conservation

Water usage data for all facilities with water billing from a vendor has been entered into the Utility Manager system. Water usage status updates for the users in the Utility Manager system and the County Operations Center show a 13% reduction countywide in water usage in January 2015 from January 2013.

Emergency Response Planning and Emergency Actions

County Office of Emergency Services

San Luis Obispo County OES continues to coordinate with the Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) to provide updates on the drought situation, respond to specific information requests to Cal OES, and coordinate local emergency needs. County OES continues to participate in the statewide drought conference calls hosted by Cal OES.

Contingency Planning

County Public Health, the Public Works Department, and CAL FIRE/County Fire continue to develop plans to ensure there is adequate supply of water for firefighting and domestic water use in the event that a community does not have enough water. Water availability information from public water systems has been categorized into three categories; Watch, Vulnerable, and Critical. The information has been placed into a GIS mapping layer for contingency planning. These maps are available on all the County Fire Departments mobile data computers. During a fire, the fire commanders can use these maps to identify which water sources are reliable and draw down systems that are vulnerable.

Emergency Actions

The proclamation continues to provide authority for unforeseen needed actions. As also noted, proclamation provides a statement to State and Federal agencies of the seriousness of the County's situation.

The County has taken no new emergency actions specific to the drought during this reporting period.

Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Board review and receive the attached update. The update highlights the existence of continuing drought conditions in San Luis Obispo County. Review of this update by the Board fulfills the Board's duty to review the need to continue the proclamation of a local emergency due to the existence of drought conditions pursuant to Government Code section 8630. No other Board action is necessary.

Note: Any regulations issued because of the local drought emergency would be subject to Board approval. The local emergency proclamation, adopted by the Board on March 11, 2014, will remain in effect until terminated by your Board.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT/IMPACT

At the onset of the Governor's declaration and under the direction of the County Administrative Officer, a County Drought Task Force was formed. The Drought Task Force is comprised of multiple County departments, including: the Administrative Office, Office of Emergency Services, Public Works Department, County Parks and Recreation, County Fire (CAL FIRE), Agricultural Commissioner, Planning and Building, Farm Advisor, Health Agency, County Counsel, and First District Supervisor Frank Mecham. All member departments provided input for this report.

County OES continues to be in regular contact with Cal OES to receive and provide situation status information.

The Public Works Department continues to coordinate with local water purveyors and cities.

Public Health is coordinating with relevant State agencies, including the State California Department of Public Health and Emergency Medical Services Authority Health Coordination Center.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

The long-term financial impact on the local economy, including the demand on County and other legal agency services, cannot be forecast at this time. The County continues to track drought-related costs. As of March 25, 2016, tracked labor

costs associated with the drought total \$382,995.

RESULTS

Accepting the update prepared by the Drought Task Force, which establishes the existence of conditions of drought, confirms the need to continue the proclamation of a local emergency. Maintaining the proclamation of local emergency will continue to allow for the Public Works Department and other agencies to take immediate actions needed by allowing temporary reduction of certain regulatory and purchasing requirements. This will also permit County staff to assist in drought-related work and tasks outside their normal scope of duties in the capacity of Disaster Service Workers under Government Code section 3100. In addition, acceptance of the update from the Drought Task Force confirms the continuing existence of severe drought conditions and will also serve as notice to the State of our dire conditions and a reminder to all of the serious drought conditions facing the County and State.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Attachment 1 – U.S. Drought Monitor Map
2. Attachment 2 – Rainfall and Reservoir Data
3. Attachment 3 – Local Reservoir Conditions